Fig. 1. Al-Qurnī

3:2 only one yields potable water—hence the name of the hamlet, which means "sweet."

137 The sparse natural flora of al-Qurnī is an excellent example of garrigue which is widely distributed around the Mediterranean in districts which feature thin soils and calcareous outcrops. Comparing garrigue to the relatively more lush vegetation typical of the French Provence, Fisher says:

CONSERVATISM AND CHANGE IN A LEBANESE VILLAGE

John Gulick*

491 361 THE COASTAL HIGHWAY which connects Beirut and Tripoli winds between the crashing surf of the Mediterranean and the abruptly rising slopes of Mount Lebanon. At one point in the journey northward along this road, the traveler may notice before him a ridge which, from the distance, seems to block his way. If, instead of continuing toward Tripoli, the traveler turns off the main highway at the foot of this ridge and winds his way up the gravel road which climbs its face to the crest, he will find himself at the southern, seaward tip of a roughly semi-circular ring of six small villages. At the center of this ring is a seventh village considerably larger than the others. This village is al-Munsif.

361 133 137 Topographically, the area which is occupied by the seven villages consists of three main ridges which project toward the sea in a fanlike fashion, so that the shape of the area is roughly triangular. The ridges are separated by deep, dry wadis; in addition there are other minor crests and gullies, so that the over-all terrain is rough and broken. The land itself is notable for the prevalence of limestone outcrops. The natural flora conforms to the type known as "garrigue," which features low, bushy scrub oak and a variety of small, thorny, aromatic plants. It is a landscape which could not inspire very much confidence in the hearts of ordinary farmers; even to Lebanese farmers, whose fortitude and resourcefulness are justly famous, it has presented a serious challenge.

361 312 But the challenge does not end with land features as such. An even more serious problem is the lack of ground water. There are, indeed, two springs very close to the shore, but both are small and one is brackish. All the water used in the area is winter rain water drained off the roofs of the houses and stored in large underground cisterns, of which there are a very large number. This supply must provide for all the needs of the inhabitants for the entire year. The amount which can be devoted to watering plants is, therefore, extremely limited, and irrigation, in the sense generally applied [illegible]

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[illegible], *V. lebetina* [illegible] and *V. palaestinae*, are encountered in some localities. 156 252

Rodents. The brown rat, *Rattus norvegicus*, is prevalent throughout the coastal area. *R. rattus alexandrinus* is present in small numbers in Beirut and the coast towns, but predominates in the inland villages. *R. rattus rattus* is also present. Mice are abundant under both urban and rural conditions. 156 247

Mollusks.* The fresh-water snail, *Bulinus truncatus* (= *B. contortus*), is found in a few localized areas—in the vicinity of Sidon, in the Nahr el [illegible] and the irrigation ditches connected with the springs of Ras el 'Ain, near Tyre, and in the Litany River, around the Qasmie bridge in the Bekaa. It is the intermediate host of *Schistosoma haematobium*, and, although the infection apparently is not endemic in the indigenous population, it has recently been observed among Palestinian refugees in the Tyre region. 156 164 [6-8]

Plants. Little scientific information is available, but many of the trees, the grasses and the weeds which are known to produce allergic manifestations in susceptible individuals in other countries flourish in Lebanon. 157 252

The stocks of wheat sometimes contain seeds of *Cephalaria syriaca* or *Lolium temulentum*. Occasional cases of poisoning are traceable to the consumption of breads or *burghul* prepared from wheat flours thus contaminated.

The broad bean, *Vicia faba*, is widely used as a food, but it may cause toxic symptoms when eaten raw. Serious cases are relatively rare, but fatalities are reported almost annually among young children. In some cases, the chick-pea, *Lathyrus sativus*, a common fodder crop, is responsible for poisoning when it is used as a food. [165]

FOOD SANITATION

The sanitary inspection of restaurants and premises where food is prepared or sold is the responsibility of the municipal health 164

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* See footnote, page 10.

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